

Analyzing voice in language policy documents of the Moroccan government

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Language policy

Spolsky (2004) pointed out that all language practices, beliefs, and decisions can be referred to as language policy, but not all such policies are explicit. Some are implicit, with people using them in their daily lives ungoverned by directly stated rules (Spolsky, 2004). Although explicit language policies sometimes minimally affect language practices, some of these regulations are still created by authorities in certain countries. A good example of explicit language is that found in government documents, which record policymakers' decisions regarding how, when, and which language should be spoken and where. Moreover, Shohamy (2006) stated that language policy sometimes influences social ideology. Thus, such a policy is always supported by the cultural, ideological, and economic aspects of powerful populations. The same holds true for the Moroccan context. A new Constitution was approved in July 2011 as a result of protests calling for greater democracy and political reform, this makes the government work to update the 1996 constitution. (Rubio, 2015). Furthermore, there were many social and cultural aspects in Morocco that affects policymakers' decisions such as the social movements, feminist associations and human rights organizations since the early 1990s that asked for reforms and change (De Castro, 2016).

Interestingly, in their context-oriented discourse analysis, Krzyżanowski and Wodak (2011) indicated that multilingualist language policy oscillates between economic values and people's cultures and ideologies. The authors found that political interests play a critical role in functionalizing language policy. Similarly, Wodak et al. (2012) averred that language choices depend on many factors, such as language ideology and context-related issues. In the present paper, the researcher examined how context-related factors—in this case, 'an official document'—and ideology are reflected in the different linguistic voices present in Morocco's 2011 language policy.

Critical discourse analysis and the discourse-historical approach

Savski (2016) showed that conducting critical discourse analysis helps determine the difference between two voices in language policy documents of the government. He added that using the discourse-historical approach (DHA) advances the differentiation between attitudes and social knowledge in various fields and how they are represented in a historical context. In the current analysis, the DHA was deployed to probe into how policymakers' linguistic voices are represented in the texts of language policy documents and their relationship with society and history. Wodak and Meyer (2009) stated that the DHA enables the exploration of how texts, genres, and discourses change in relation to sociopolitical change. This is exactly what happened in Morocco when it updated its constitution in 2011 after political revolutions occurred in the Middle East. Specifically, the Moroccan government added a new language, Tamazight, as an official language aside from Arabic. Wodak and Meyer (2009) pointed out that the DHA is suitable for the field of politics, as it can be used to develop a conceptual framework for political discourse. It is therefore a practical method of analyzing government documents, such as the Moroccan constitution. This constitution is updated to represent different variety of social groups and to adapt the state structure to the social, political, historical or cultural features of the society as concluded by Rkioua (2012).

History and identity of Moroccan Arabic and tamazight

It is important to note that Morocco had only one official language, Arabic, until 2011 (Tomaštik, 2010), during which the country updated its constitution. One of the most radical changes was that concerning language articles, which now recognize Tamazight as another official language. According to Zouhir (2014), standard Arabic language is the language of prestige in Morocco, that is, the language used in religion, education, and official functions. Arabic helps Morocco be part of Arabic nations on the basis of the idea of 'one nation, one religion and one language' (Sadiqi, 2003). It is the language of Islamic identity (Sadiqi, 2003). This language represents the national identity and values that were explored in this paper.

Although only 35% of Moroccans speak standard Arabic fluently (Elbiad, 1991), it is seen by the population as the language of their identity. According to Tomaštik (2010), the Arabic language is used in school instructions, TV programs, and political settings in Morocco, and it is not simply the spoken

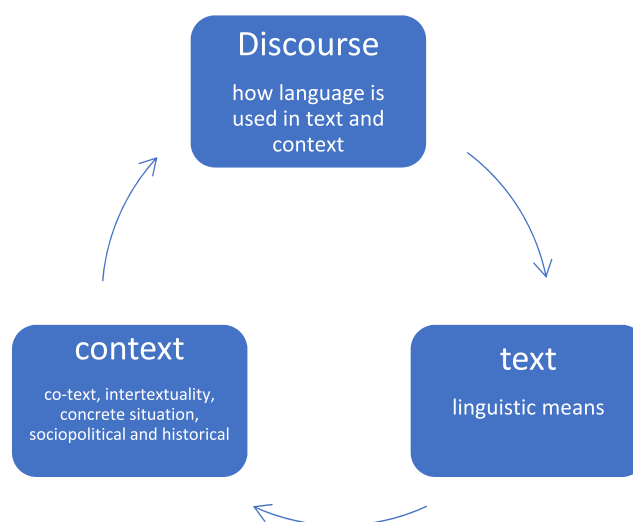


Figure 1. Levels of analysis.

Table 1. Adapted textual analysis table for the Moroccan context.

Strategy	Objectives	In Morocco's official document
Nomination/referential	Construction of in- and out-groups	How language is used to refer to actors (e.g. using categories or metaphors)
Predication	Labeling social actors positively or negatively	Explicit and implicit attribution
Argumentation	Justification of positive or negative attributions	How policymakers use arguments to support their claims
Perspectivation	Expressing involvement, positioning a speaker's point of view	How point of view is expressed in the text
Intensification, mitigation	Modifying the epistemic status of a proposition	Intention in producing utterance (illocutionary force)

Source: Wodak (2008).

Analysis and discussion

As expected, many different voices could be discerned from the text. The researcher analyzed the Arabic text of Article 5 (the section devoted to language) of the Moroccan constitution of 2011, and translated extracts were utilized to explain these voices. The translated version of the constitution can be found online at www.constituteproject.org (see Appendix A). All the exact textual translations were reproduced from the website. The two prominent voices present in the text are discussed as follows.

National identity and unity

The voice presented clearly in the document is what we can call the voice of national identity and unity. This voice is connected to Morocco's history and identity as one nation. It emphasizes the importance of being Moroccan as opposed to any other categorization of identity. In this respect, Moroccan identity is linked to language, culture, attitudes, history, and emotions.

Likewise, Tamazight constitutes an official language of the State, being common patrimony of all Moroccans without exception. (Extract 1, Article 5)

In extract 1, there is clear evidence of policymakers' emphasis on the importance of identity and unity as a Moroccan nation. It is projected as a good reason for the addition of Tamazight as an official language. That is, Tamazight is the heritage of all Moroccans, which is why policymakers declared it an official language. The use of words such as '*all*', '*without exception*', and '*Moroccans*' are good examples of the focus on national unity. In this stance, policymakers strategically use the language to refer to people in Morocco as one connected country emphasizing their unity.

The State works for the preservation of Hassani, as an integral component of the Moroccan cultural unity, as well as the protection of the speakers [of it] and of the practical cultural expression of Morocco. Likewise, it sees (wake up at night to make sure) to the coherence of linguistic policy and national culture. (Extract 2, Article 5)

this language has an important role in society, so all people should know and see it in actual situations. They clearly stated that a law should be created to define the process of identifying Tamazight as an official language into not just teaching but also into the priority domains of public life. This stance shows how policymakers respect language rights and diversity by focusing on the importance of implementing process of Tamazight as an official language.

Arabic in the 1996 and 2011 constitutions

Unlike the 2011 constitution, the 1996 version has no section on language. The preamble to the latter stipulates the following: 'An Islamic and fully sovereign state whose official language is Arabic, the Kingdom of Morocco constitutes a part of the Great Arab Maghreb'. This is the only segment where one can find the word 'language'. It is clearly stated that there are no official languages other than Arabic, and no clear language policy for the country is mentioned.

Arabic is still the official language of the State.

The State works for the protection and for the development of the Arabic language, as well as the promotion of its use. (Extract 6, Article 5)

In extract 6 of the 2011 document, Arabic is highlighted as the official language of the country in the past years—a point emphasized by '*still*'. Policymakers want to *protect*, *develop*, and *promote* it. The use of these verbs implies the importance of the language in Moroccan society, suggesting that even if another language is designated as an official language, Arabic remains saved and protected. By doing so policymakers want to assure people that by adding new official language, the main national language that is spoken by majority of people will not be affected by any new act. They are emphasizing language rights and diversity but not forgetting national identity and unity.

Conclusion

The analysis led to the conclusion that government documents can be used to determine policymakers' beliefs and ideologies, which are then reflected in society and sociocultural practices. The voices in these written texts were analyzed to discuss how writers' ideologies, attitudes, and beliefs manifest in documents. This approach advanced the examination of language policy documents to ascertain how the ideologies espoused by authorities may affect people's philosophies in the future and change society. There are many voices found in the language section of Morocco's 2011 constitution, but the two prominent ones were that based on multilingualism and linguistic pluralism in a democratic country and that focusing on Moroccan identity, history, and unity as one nation. The former is supported by the inclusion of a new indigenous language as an official language of the country and respect for its culture and people. The latter tends to denote that despite the addition of another official language, the country remains one unified nation, and Arabic is still saved and protected by the language policy stipulated in the new constitution. This is designed to ensure people that all their cultural, religious, and social norms are safe. Written language policy can be analyzed on the basis of voice, which has been shown to have a good connection to ideologies and practices.

The study has some limitations that should be mentioned, the first of which concerns the data collected through only text discourse analysis, it would be better if the researcher strengthen the results by interviewing policymakers to find out more insights and to might suggest turning them into actions. Second, people opinion is worth to be explored to see how these changes in the country constitutions could affect their identity and to examine its potential sociocultural effects. This study examined how language policy is presented in the Moroccan constitution of 2011 and how policymakers add new official language trying not to affect national unity and culture. Future studies of political aspects of this change and its sociocultural effects are highly recommended to help in understanding how language policy might affect people societies, cultures and identities.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

The State works for the preservation of Hassani, as an integral component of the Moroccan cultural unity, as well as the protection of the speakers [of it] and of the practical cultural expression of Morocco. Likewise, it sees to the coherence of linguistic policy and national culture and to the learning and mastery of the foreign languages of greatest use in the world, as tools of communication, of integration and of interaction [by which] society [may] know, and to be open to different cultures and to contemporary civilizations.

A National Council of Languages and of Moroccan Culture [Conseil national des langues et de la culture marocaine] is created, charged with[, notably[, the protection and the development of the Arabic and Tamazight languages and of the diverse Moroccan cultural expressions, which constitute one authentic patrimony and one source of contemporary inspiration. It brings together the institutions concerned in these domains. An organic law determines its attributions, composition and the modalities of [its] functioning.